DEATH'S HEAD TREE

Accursed Trees Bearing Foul Fruit

Habitat: Forest; **Treasure:** Any

Resembling a gnarled oak at a glance, these trees are much more sinister upon closer inspection. Growing from the accursed plant are many appendages that appear to be severed heads of humanoid creatures. The heads can appear as any humanoid species and might all be of the same nature or of a great variety. While the tree remains undisturbed these heads appear as if in a deep sleep, however, if the tree is disturbed the heads suddenly spring into a facsimile of life, stinging together sentences that seldom make any sense. Should the tree feel it is in danger, the heads will detach themselves from the tree and become death's heads (*Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft pg. 232*), which will fight to defend the tree by any means necessary. Should a head survive the ordeal, they will go on to wreak havoc on living creatures or to find a suitable place to bury themselves in the ground and become a new death's head tree in 1d12 months.

A death's head tree doesn't require sunlight or water to sustain itself, however, it does need to feed upon the blood of humanoid creatures. It's for this reason that they only grow in places where a tremendous amount of bloodshed has taken place. Old battlefields and grisly murder scenes are just a few of the potential breeding grounds for a death's head tree, though anywhere they grow is sure to have been the sight of a terrible event. If the place of their original inception becomes devoid of energy resultant from bloodshed, they may resort to awakening one of the heads on their form to begin crying out for help in an attempt to lure travellers closer in order to feed themselves.

While they are still plants, the innate magical nature of the death's head tree makes them resistant to all manner of magical assault and entirely immune to fire. Due to this unique trait their wood is highly sought after by those who would seek to craft magical items which must include some amount of wood such as the body of a warforged creature or a fire resistant heater shield.

TREE NURSERIES

1d6	The Tree Has Grown...
1	Amid a forest that was once the site of a vicious battle.
2	On the grave of a brutal killer.
3	In the center of an abandoned town where a massacre once took place.
4	At the edge of a stream which flows through the depths of a gruesome cult's lair.
5	In a grove, curated and tended to by a vampire.
6	At the bottom of a pit where bodies are frequently disposed of.

FOUL SEEDS

When a death's head tree is encountered, if it is growing on land where a sufficient amount of blood has been spilled, it may be ready to germinate and attempt to reproduce another tree. In such cases, any death's heads created by the tree have the following trait;

Seeded Bite. When the death's head hits with a bite attack, *Constitution Saving Throw:* DC 14. *Failure:* The target is infected with a death's head tree seed. If not removed by taking an hour to make a DC 20 Medicine check or a casting of *Lesser Restoration* before the creature takes a Long Rest, the seed will take root. Once a seed has taken root only a casting of *Lesser Restoration, Horrid Wilting,* or equivalent magic will destroy it. A rooted seed causes 2d4 Necrotic damage to the host creature. This damage cannot be reduced in any way, and the host's Hit Point maximum is reduced by the damage dealt. The amount of damage dealt by the seed increases by 1d4 with each passing day. A creature reduced to 0 HP by this damage dies and a death's head tree springs up from their corpse with one head resembling the head of the host creature.

Death's Head Tree

Huge Plant, Chaotic Evil

AC 16 **Initiative** +1 (11)
Hit Points 115 (10d12 + 50)
Speed 5 ft.

	MOD	SAVE		MOD	SAVE		MOD	SAVE
STR 22	+6	+6	**DEX** 12	+1	+1	**CON** 20	+5	+5
INT 1	-5	-5	**WIS** 2	-4	-4	**CHA** 1	-5	-5

Immunities Fire, Psychic; Charmed, Frightened, Sleep, Stunned
Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 120 ft., Passive Perception 11
Languages -
Challenge 8 (XP 3,900; PB +3)

Traits

Foul Fruit. The tree has 7 (2d6) Death's Heads attached to its branches. At the start of every week, if the head has fewer than 12 Death's Heads, it grows another 7 (2d6) on its branches up to a maximum of 12. The heads remain dormant and attached to the tree until separated or the tree dies.

Immutable Form. The tree can't shape-shift.

Magic Resistance. The tree has Advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The tree makes two slam attacks. It can replace one with a use of its Severed Head.

Slam. *Melee Attack Roll:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) Bludgeoning damage.

Severed Head (Detaches 1 Death's Head). *Ranged Attack Roll:* +9 to hit, range 60/120 ft. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) Bludgeoning damage. A Death's Head appears in the space of the target, or an adjacent space if the attack missed, and immediately takes its turn in initiative after the tree. The head will fight to the death to defend the tree.

Bonus Actions

Uncanny Screams. The tree causes one of the heads attached to its branches to cry out in a mockery of speech, requesting aid from a creature the tree can see within 120 feet. *Wisdom Saving Throw:* DC 15. Failure: The target is frightened of the tree for 1 minute, during which they must attempt to get as close to the tree as possible and use their action to make a melee attack each round. The frightened creature can attempt another Wisdom Saving Throw at the end of each of their turns. *Success:* The target is immune to the tree's Uncanny Screams ability for 24-hours.

Reactions

Defensive Decapitation. *Trigger*: The tree takes damage. *Response*: 1d4 Death's Heads (if any) that are attached to the tree separate from its branches and fight to the death to defend the tree.

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The Monstrous YouTube Video This Came From: ***The Terrifying Implications of Death's Head Tree Lore in D&D***

Created in compliance with the Dungeons & Dragons SRD 5.1

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